

PRESENT

Cllr Lindsay – Chairman
Cllr H White
Cllr S Hitchings
Cllr J Stayt
Cllr P Osborne
Cllr R Holmes
Cllr N Lacey-Clarke
Cllr C Stevens

Cllr L Hitchings – Vice Chairman
Cllr H Mieville
Cllr D Russell
Cllr B Quayle
Cllr R Carter
Cllr C Jacques
Cllr A Cross

IN ATTENDANCE

Town Clerk
Operations Manager
Justine Wingrove - Owner of Old Bank House
Sam James
Joyce Carter

Assistant Town Clerk
Nicci Brown – Press
Adam Sales
Pat Harrison

69. PUBLIC SESSION

- 69.1 Mrs Wingrove spoke about the Old Bath House and its access, which is through the garden of the Old Bank House. The Old Bath House was given to the Town Council in 2015, but has previously belonged to the Old Bank House as a unit. They would like to use the rear of the Old Bath House as a potting shed but keep the front exactly as it is now. There is no intention for any other use. They would be happy to document that the front would not be changed. Mrs Wingrove explained her concern about the security of their garden if the property would be sold, with potential access being built. They are committed to keeping the integrity of the building and are aware it is Grade II listed, as is the Old Bank House.

70. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS

Cllr Quayle gave the report this month.

- 70.1 Highways – Cllrs Quayle and Lacey-Clarke would appreciate comments about the new traffic lights on Badger Cross as they have received some negative comments. The Highways department have sanctioned works on Holland Way footpath to correct the issues raised to both Councillors, which have now been completed. Meetings have been held with Highways about introducing and advocating 20mph zones, and they would appreciate any comments from Town Councillors. There is a plan for Edward Street to also be a 20mph, and an e-mail with details has been sent to Councillors previously. There will be an experiment on the junction of Holland Way, Heddington Drive and Fairfield Bungalows, where yellow cones will be placed to see if double yellow lines would make a difference to the residents, who have sent various complaints. Cllr Quayle and Lacey-Clarke are pushing for double yellow lines on various junctions in Blandford Forum, but Highways feel it might be better placed to be done under the Parking Review, using one Traffic Management Order. As per the recommendation from Town & General Purposes Committee in March, Highways have agreed that double yellow lines are not suitable and a single white line is being introduced in Westbury Way. Cllr Quayle has requested that any potholes need to be reported.

70. REPORT FROM DORSET COUNCIL COUNCILLORS (CONT.)

- 70.2 Boots – Cllr Kerby, who is also Deputy Chair of Dorset Health Scrutiny Committee has been in touch with both Cllrs Quayle and Lacey-Clarke. They have been in touch with both the senior management at Boots and NHS England to discuss the issues that have arisen previously. Cllr Quayle has requested that any complaints are best dealt with by NHS England and not Boots itself.
- 70.3 Pavement Slabs – As the Bid for the Highstreet Fund has not been successful, both Councillors are working on the replacement slabs again and are hoping for Town Council support.
- 70.4 Dorset Council – An advisory panel has been set up, working with town and parish councils. The first meeting was held on 27th September.
- 70.5 Let's Talk – An event held at the Blandford Day centre on 19th October at 10am. It is aimed at parents and carers for children with special education needs or disabilities. Parents and carers are urged to come forward to seek help and speak about the service with Dorset Council.
- 70.6 Digital Champion – Volunteers who help vulnerable people access the internet and gain basic skills. The next meeting is in the Blandford Library from 4-6pm on the 4th Monday of the month. It is essential to register to book an appointment, which can be done via the library or a hotline, which Cllr Quayle will share with other Councillors.

Cllr Mieville enquired if the Highways solution put forward for Edward Street will also be applied to Albert Street and Victoria Street. Cllr Quayle confirmed that this will be the case. He also spoke about a culture change where people use the bypass instead of any back roads. Cllr Mieville asked if there is a timeline for the Parking Review. Cllr Quayle does not have an update but will advise Councillors as soon as there is one.

Cllr Holmes thanked Cllr Quayle for his quick response regarding the footpath at Holland Way, as she also received correspondence from a resident. Cllr Holmes noticed that the lines have been redone by Salisbury Road, near the cemetery. The new traffic lights at Badger Cross are far better and safer. Cllr Quayle confirmed that Highways are currently out looking at lines that need to be redone.

Cllr Lindsay confirmed that the traffic lights at Badger Cross are brilliant and much safer for pedestrians.

71. APOLOGIES

Cllr P Clark

72. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REQUESTS FOR DISPENSATIONS

Cllr Carter declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 8.1.2, due to his involvement in the Literacy Festival.

Cllr Quayle declared an interest in agenda item 8.1.1 as his wife is a hirer of the building and will take part in the discussion but not vote.

Cllr Lacey-Clarke declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 12.5.1, due to his involvement with Forum Drama. He will take part in the discussions but will not vote.

73. MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 8TH JULY 2019

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Mieville and AGREED (13 in favour, 2 abstentions) that the Town Council Minutes be APPROVED and SIGNED.

74. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE

- 74.1 Climate Change Working Group meeting – Julie Wigg from Dorset Community Action was in attendance, giving the working group ideas about funding that is available. The Town Clerk is in the process of writing an Action Plan to be considered at the October Town Council meeting.
- 74.2 Toilet Donation Requests – Letters have been sent to 25 surrounding parishes, seeking financial contribution to the toilets. In this past year, Bryanston, Blandford St Mary, Charlton Marshall, South Tarrant Valley and Tarrant Monkton & Launceston Parish Councils have supported the Town Council in the delivery of its toilets.
- 74.3 Railway Arches – The staircase was installed on 26th September, hence why the fencing and access issue is not yet on the agenda and we have not yet received the request from BRAT as to what their preferred option would be for the access.
- 74.4 Meetings – The Town Clerk has attended a SLCC meeting in Wimborne, a Clerks and Chairmen meeting in Shaftesbury and a Clerks meeting in Dorchester with Matt Prosser and John Sellgren. Notable points are:
- Sherborne are no longer dealing with Planning matters and will now only consider applications for developments of five + houses.
 - Green initiatives – we discussed water fountains/refill points and agreed to encourage refill points and people to carry refillable bottles as an alternative considering the costs involved.
 - Some councils had found electric trimmers to be a success, whereas others had not.
 - Light industrial and ways to encourage employment locally. The Mayor of Shaftesbury raised this issue and wondered what we could all do to encourage local employment. The Town Clerk offered to approach the portfolio holder for economy, Cllr Gary Suttle, and he has offered to attend the next meeting of the Chairs and Clerks.
 - This was an incredibly valuable meeting and the next one is scheduled for January.
- 74.5 Free Expression – Kate Seeger has written to thank the Town Council for its support for the Free Expression Arts Festival and hope it may continue for future years.
- 74.6 Freedom of Information Act Request – The Town Clerk received a Freedom of Information request for the Woodhouse Gardens project. This has been responded to although the final accounts are awaited.
- 74.7 Woodhouse Gardens – The Bookings Receptionist has received additional bookings for the pavilion since its opening, with one of the choirs that attended the Picnic in the Park booking a regular slot, the weekly Italian class relocating there from the Community Room, birthday parties and other enquiries. This is fantastic news for this improved community facility.
- 74.8 Mayor's Civic Day – The Civic Day went well on Friday and we have received very positive feedback.
- 74.9 NALC Survey – The Town Clerk has completed a survey from NALC on the elections process for town and parish councils.
- 74.10 Simon Hoare MP – The Mayor attended the 106th birthday party for Nan Dennett and reported back that it would be her dream to attend a garden party. The Town Clerk approached Simon Hoare MP and he arranged for the Lord Lieutenant's office to send the applications through. Both Simon Hoare and Cllr Lindsay have agreed to be Nan's nominators and we await the outcome.
- 74.11 Health & Safety – The Town Council has received a 96% compliance rating from our H&S Audit, which puts us in the top band with no critical or high actions to carry out and seven medium actions required.

74. TOWN CLERK'S REPORT & CORRESPONDENCE(CONT.)

- 74.12 Dorset National Park – The Blandford and District Civic Society has copied the Town Council into a letter to the Dorset National Park Team, which confirms its support of the inclusion of the whole of the new Dorset Unitary Authority area, including the town of Blandford Forum, within the proposed new Dorset National Park. The Society stated that Blandford Forum includes both an architecturally and historically important town centre with six Grade 1 listed buildings and a fine scenic area in the Crown Meadows with an interesting range of wildlife. The surrounding area, sandwiched between two AONBs and containing a number of historic hill forts and exceptional countryside, should also be included. Cllr White noted that the Town Council did not support this.
- 74.13 Scaffolding Update – In June a scaffolding company which the Town Council does not use started to dismantle the scaffolding at the rear of the Town Hall and were only stopped from doing so by the intervention of the Town Clerk. Although after some persuasion they did return and put the scaffolding back up, they did not attach a Scaff Tag, which is required to prove the scaffolding is safe to use. Despite several requests from the Operations Manager to have this carried out the company never returned to do it leaving the Town Council with a scaffold they could not use or the option of getting another scaffolding company to inspect and certificate the scaffolding at a significant cost. Following some investigative work the company address was obtained and a letter threatening legal action was sent on July 29th. Shortly after they received this they did then return to tag the scaffolding as requested. However the legislation has changed and the scaffolding now needs to be tagged on a weekly basis or prior to it being used, as we do not use it often it has been decided to take the scaffolding out of use unless it is needed and then we will arrange a safety inspection and tagging. Due to youths running across the roof we have now also removed the ladder and this is awaiting collection from the scaffolding company that we use and will be brought back when access is required.

75. CIVIC REPORT

The paper was sent to Councillors via email.

76. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RECEIPT OF MINUTES

The paper was tabled (see Appendix A).

76.1 Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 9th September 2019

76.11.1 Minute No. 20 – To receive the recommendations from the free venue hire working group

The paper was tabled (see Appendix F).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Carter and AGREED (12 in favour, 2 abstentions, 1 non-vote) that

The additional suggestions following the Finance and Staffing Committee meeting are added to the resolution.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr L Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Lindsay and AGREED (12 in favour, 2 abstentions, 1 non-vote) that

The separate budget line for free venue hire within Earmarked Reserves is removed from the proposal.

It was then PROPOSED by Cllr White, SECONDED by Cllr Holmes and AGREED (12 in favour, 1 against, 1 abstention, 1 non-vote) that the additional considerations from the agenda are added.

76.1 Finance & Staffing Committee Meeting held on Monday 9th September 2019 (Cont.)

The recommendations of the Working Group are approved, starting from 1st April 2020, subject to the following amendments:

- **In March each year, the Committee notes the free venue hire requests approved throughout the financial year and considers the virement of any underspend.**
- **Any grant approved is worth no more than £300 of venue hire.**
- **Any hiring past 10pm results in overtime fees, with the cost being passed on to the free hirer.**
- **Regular, paying hirers are not cancelled or relocated (if possible) to accommodate a free hire.**
- **The free hire is dealt with as a 100% discount to avoid transferring funds from one budget to another (with the booking system, a council meeting is booked as Free of Charge and no charge is made).**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

76.1.2 Minute No. 24.1 Blandford Literary Festival – First Application

The paper was noted (see Appendix J).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lindsay, SECONDED by Cllr P Osborne and AGREED (14 in favour, 1 non-vote) that

A grant of up to £327.44 + VAT is awarded for free hire of Town Council venues for the Blandford Literary Festival.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

76.1.3 The Minutes were RECEIVED.

76.2 Recreation & Amenities Committee Meeting held on Monday 16th September 2019

The Minutes were RECEIVED.

76.3 Town & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on Monday 23rd September 2019

The meeting was cancelled due to it being inquorate.

77. TO CONSIDER THE FUTURE OWNERSHIP OF THE OLD BATH HOUSE

Cllr Osborne left the meeting at 7.51pm.

Cllr Osborne returned to the meeting at 7.53pm.

The paper was tabled (see Appendix B).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr Cross that the Town Council agrees to dispose of the Old Bath House, subject to negotiations.

Cllr White PROPOSED an amendment, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED unanimously to include that **the disposal is in principle**.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council agrees to dispose of The Old Bath House, in principle, subject to negotiations.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

78. TO APPOINT A CONTRACTOR FOR THE TOWN PUMP RESTORATION

The paper was noted (See Appendix C).

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, but NOT SECONDED that the Town Council appoints contractor C for the required works.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Quayle but NOT AGREED (5 in favour, 9 against, 1 abstention) that Contractor A and B are requested to provide further details on their proposed work.

Cllr White PROPOSED an amendment, SECONDED by Cllr Cross, but withdrawn by Cllr White, that Contractor B is removed from Cllr Lacey-Clarke's proposal.

It was then PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (9 in favour, 2 against, 4 abstentions) that

The Town Council appoints contractor A for the required works, using funds of £4,800 from budget line 1019 OBH/ St Peter & St Paul Churchyard/ Town Pump (total cost of £9,600 with the balance being match funded from the already obtained S106 monies from the Lidl store), (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

79. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE SMALL CHRISTMAS TREES AND APPROVE EXPENDITURE FOR INSTALLATION OF THE TREES AND COLUMN LIGHTS

The paper was noted (See Appendix D).

Councillors discussed purchasing a cherry picker, although this is not possible at present due to storage issues.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr S Hitchings, SECONDED by Cllr Stayt and AGREED (14 in favour, 1 abstention) that

**The Town Council approves expenditure authority of £1,400.00 for the installation and removal of the small Christmas trees using funds from the General Reserves budget line.
The Town Council approves expenditure authority of £5,300.00 for the installation, connection and removal of the lights on 21 lamp posts throughout the town, using funds from the General Reserves budget line (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).
The Town Council will discuss the future budget commitment at the Finance and Staffing budget setting.**

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

80. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FROM THE:

80.1 Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – Blandford+

An exploratory meeting was held with the Examiner in August. The informal hearing is being held on 12th November 2019, which will include a field trip to various sites around Blandford. Cllr Carter thanked the Project Administrator for all her hard work.

80. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE AND CONSIDER ANY REQUESTS FROM THE (CONT.):

80.2 BFTC Commemoration Group

The meetings have started again to discuss the next events on 1st and 2nd May 2020.

80.3 Public Art Working Group

Cllr Osborne reported that a meeting was held on 23rd September where the artist presented his drawings and took away some ideas from Councillors for amendments to the design.

80.4 Corn Exchange Working Group

80.4.1 To approve the plans for the Corn Exchange stage and lantern light ceiling (subject to receipt of these from the architect)

Cllr Carter thanked the members of the public for attending the meeting, which was brought to their attention by the Town Clerk.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Holmes, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council defers this agenda item to the next Working Group meeting on 21st October and then to the subsequent Town Council meeting on 28th October, due to the architect not supplying the plans and documentation, as was promised, in time for Councillors to be able to study them prior to this agenda item.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

Cllr Lacey-Clarke requested for a letter to be sent to the architect noting the disappointment of Councillors and members of the public, for not receiving the plans on time and having to defer this agenda item to another meeting.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

80.5 VE75 Planning Group

80.5.1 To receive an update and consider expenditure authority to support the VE Day 75 Celebrations

Cllr Stayt left the meeting at 8.32pm.

Cllr Stayt returned to the meeting at 8.35pm.

The paper was noted (See Appendix E) and

The Town Council:

- Noted the proposals to date
- Instructs officers to publicise the plan for the weekend
- Introduce a shop window competition, like the Town Council's Christmas window competition (to encourage shops/businesses to decorate their premises)
- Offers the Big Band evening free of charge to the public, with donations to SSAFA
- Positions the silent soldiers on the churchyard for the weekend
- Cllr Stevens confirmed that the WI is producing bunting for the Town Centre.
- Instructs officers to write to the pubs, clubs and hotels in the town with the national guidance
- Instructs officers to invite the twin towns to join in this joyous occasion (as per the guidance)
- Asks Cllr Carter to involve the schools with relevant activities
- Requests groups involved to register their events at www.veday75.org

80.5.1 To receive an update and consider expenditure authority to support the VE Day 75 Celebrations (Cont.)

The following items will be considered at a future meeting:

- Approve any expenditure requests to date and allocate a budget
- Commission two commemorative/celebratory VE Day 75 benches for Woodhouse Gardens and approve associated expenditure
- Consider the dates requested by Forum Drama and free hire

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

80.6 Dorset Council Grant to support the Market Area Enhancement Project

80.61.1 To consider creating a working group to formulate a plan and make recommendations to full council

The Town Council agrees to create a working group, consisting of Cllrs Cross, Stevens, S Hitchings, Carter, Jacques and Lindsay as Chairman of Council.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

81. CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION

The paper was noted (See Appendix F).

Cllr Stayt left the meeting at 8.42pm.

81.1 To consider Christmas Window Competition details and expenditure approval for proposed prize money

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke, SECONDED by Cllr Quayle and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council approves the following prizes using funds from Christmas Town Decorations budget line (Expenditure Authority: General Power of Competence, Localism Act 2011, S1-8).

1st Prize - £150.00

2nd Prize - £100.00

3rd Prize - £50.00

Charity/not for profit organisation - £50.00

Total prize money: £350.00

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

81.2 To appoint the judges for the Christmas Window Competition 2019

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Osborne, SECONDED by Cllr Quayle and AGREED unanimously that

The Town Council appoints the following judges; the Town Mayor, the Chairman of T&GP, the editor of the Forum Focus and the Mayor's Scout and Guide.

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

82. REPORTS FROM COMMUNITY AND LOCAL ORGANISATIONS

82.1 Report of visit to Blandford Citizens Advice 09/07/19

The paper was noted (See Appendix G).

83. CONFIDENTIAL

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Carter, SECONDED by Cllr Lacey-Clarke and AGREED unanimously that

The public and press may be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity might be prejudicial to the public interest as per the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. Mrs Wingrove and Mr Sales are permitted to stay as interested parties in the Old Bath House.

The Chairman decided to take a break at 8.44pm.

The meeting convened at 8.50pm.

83.1 To consider a request from the owners of the Old Bank House

The Town Council considered the impact retaining this building would have on the community, considered its Grade II listed status and future costs for essential maintenance.

Cllr S Hitchings urged Councillors to negotiate the sale price to receive the best possible outcome for the Town Council and its residents.

Cllr L Hitchings requested a recorded vote.

It was PROPOSED by Cllr Mieville, SECONDED by Cllr Cross and AGREED (11 in favour, 3 against) that

Following discussion, Councillors agreed to sell the Old Bath House (and adjoining land) for £20,000 to the owners of the Old Bank House, who have agreed to cover the associated legal fees, and to the inclusion of a covenant that the property remains within the ownership of the Old Bank House and there will be no future conversion to a dwelling.

Cllr Carter – in favour
Cllr White – in favour
Cllr Osborne – in favour
Cllr Russell – in favour
Cllr Lacey-Clarke – in favour
Cllr S Hitchings – against
Cllr Quayle – against

Cllr Holmes – in favour
Cllr Mieville – in favour
Cllr Stevens – in favour
Cllr Jacques – in favour
Cllr Lindsay – in favour
Cllr L Hitchings – against

ACTION: TOWN CLERK

The meeting closed at 9:07pm.

SIGNED

DATED